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NORTH EAST

Branch Organiser Ernie Brack, 10 Tern Close, South Beach, Blyth, Northumberland.
Tel no. Blyth 369060.

Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at the above address.
Please telephone to confirm times. The branch is currently constructing a
Swiss HO layout - 'Isenthal'.

SCOTLAND

Branch Organiser Peter Rigby, 28 Mannerston, Linlithgow, West Lothian EH49 7ND.
Tel no. 050 683 4310.

For details of latest meetings please send an sae or telephone Peter Rigby.

CHAIRMANS NOTES

We begin with two apologies. The first is for the non-appearance of the third 1987 edition of the 'Swiss Express' for reasons which will soon become apparent. The second is that this edition is produced in some haste and to a lower standard than normal. Every effort will be made to restore the usual standards as soon as possible.

We are sorry to tell you that the Editor of 'Swiss Express', Alan Ramage, has resigned. Earlier this year he suffered a spell of sickness and this, coupled with an increasing and varying workload, together with the normal pressures of domestic life (not improved by damage to his house by the recent hurricane) led to his reluctant resignation at the end of October.

Obviously, we were placed in a difficult position, with the June issue two months late and the September issue non-existent. At a Committee meeting on 30th October, one day after Alans resignation, it was agreed that the Chairman and Secretary should act as an Editorial board, assisted by committee members as necessary, until such time as a suitable replacement for the Editor could be found.

The Committee continues to place the highest importance on the production of the 'Swiss Express' as its main means of communication with the bulk of the membership, and the vehicle through which news and views can be imparted. Because of the need to restore communications this sub-standard edition has been issued. It is intended to issue a further edition at the turn of the year and, if we are fortunate, it may be possible to restore the normal standard by the end of March 1988. In any event, it is the firm intention of the committee that regular communication will be made with members, with target dates for the despatch of the 'Swiss Express' at the beginning of March, June, September and December in each year. The Committee would be pleased to hear from any member who believes he has the requisite aptitudes to take on the task of Editor, and would also like to receive continuing supply of notes, news, articles, etc. which should now be sent to John Jesson, the Secretary, whose address will be found in the inside of the cover.

Finally, it was the unanimous wish of the Committee that we should place on record our indebtedness to Alan Ramage for the concept, design and development of the 'Swiss Express' into a publication well respected here and abroad, notably in Switzerland, where it is highly regarded by official organisations. Through his work, Alan has enhanced the image of the Society, and we remain in his debt. A suitable letter has been sent to him by the Chairman.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

A RENEWAL FORM IS ENCLOSED.

Following a decision earlier this year, the fee for UK members is £8 per annum, and for those overseas £11. These are the minimum sums which enable us to break even unless membership increases. But because existing members have not received the service to which they are entitled this year the SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR EXISTING MEMBERS WILL BE REDUCED TO £6 IN THE UK AND £9 ABROAD provided renewal is BEFORE THE END OF JANUARY 1988.

SECRETARYS NOTES

First of all, another apology. There will be no Annual Dinner this year. As well as editing the magazine, Alan Ramage also organised this event, and the same problems which have caused the non-appearance of 'Swiss Express' have also meant that Alan has been unable to devote the necessary time and effort to arranging it.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 12th March, 1988 at the University of Bristol. A dinner is being arranged for the Saturday evening, and full details will be included in the next newsletter at the turn of the year.

Please can I repeat the Chairmans appeal for articles for the magazine/newsletter. These should, for the time being, be sent to me. Members who have sent articles to Alan Ramage which have not yet been published are asked to send copies to me, as we do not yet have the material which Alan has accumulated.

NOTES AND NEWS

This spot is taken up almost entirely by an eye-witness account of the storms which beset Switzerland and adjacent countries this summer, and what happened in the immediate aftermath.

Our member, Richard Pinner, was there, as was John Jesson. Richards story which follows conveys vividly the sense of immediacy and urgency at the time, and places on record so much which certainly did not reach other